

**National Library Service
for the Blind and
Physically Handicapped**

The Library of Congress

Approved by Director, NLS/BPH

Don K. Galt

Date *2/18/97*

Specification: #301

Title: Magazine Mastering

Date: February 1997



Technical Certification

John Cookson
Engineering

18 Feb 97
Date

Don Smith
Quality Assurance

2/18/97
Date

W. B. Kerner
Chief, MDD

18 Feb 97
Date

BACKGROUND

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) of the Library of Congress administers a free library service to eligible residents of the United States and citizens living abroad who cannot hold, handle, or read traditional print media because of visual or physical handicaps.

Using federal funds, NLS annually publishes approximately 2,000 books and 70 magazines on cassettes, on discs, and in braille. Titles are selected to appeal to a wide variety of interests, and copyright permission is obtained from authors and publishers. Books and magazines are narrated and duplicated at a high-quality professional standard. The quantity produced of any title is dependent on anticipated reader demand.

Playback machines and their accessories are designed to facilitate convenient use by handicapped people and to provide maximum reliability under environmental conditions that are sometimes harsh and handling that may be technically unsophisticated or inadvertently abusive. The equipment plays program materials at noncommercial speeds: 8-1/3 rpm for discs and 15/16 ips, 4-track for cassettes. All materials and equipment in the program can be sent to users and returned to libraries postage free.

A cooperating network of 56 regional libraries and more than 100 subregional libraries circulates recorded and braille books to some 700,000 adults and children out of a potential three million eligible population. Magazine subscriptions are provided on a direct-mail basis from the manufacturers. Users must generally deal with service centers in distant cities with communication by mail or phone and little or no personal contact. Everything comes and goes through a mail-order system. Fifty percent of the users are over sixty-four years old, and many depend on the NLS program for their major source of entertainment and connection with the world; 95 percent read recorded materials, 5 percent read braille.

Users are informed about new books, magazines, and services through bimonthly publications, annual catalogs, and subject bibliographies produced by NLS, and through various publications produced and circulated by the regional and subregional libraries.

USER MATERIALS

Contractors who consider submission of a bid to produce books, equipment, or other program products should be cognizant of the consumer-responsive nature of the program, and that the specifications for these products have been developed to meet the special reader needs in the program. Materials are produced with those reader needs foremost in mind, and improved through constant monitoring and consumer input. Contractors are expected to familiarize themselves with the equipment-handling practices of blind and physically handicapped clientele and ensure that the equipment they produce will stand up under this type of use. A high degree of quality workmanship and product reliability is mandated by the product specification.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 1. SCOPE | 1 |
| 2. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS | 1 |
| 3. REQUIREMENTS | 1 |
| 3.1 <u>Narration Criteria</u> | 1 |
| 3.1.1 <u>Voice</u> | 1 |
| 3.1.2 <u>Speech</u> | 1 |
| 3.1.3 <u>Aesthetic/Interpretative Requirements</u> | 2 |
| 3.1.4 <u>Alternate Narrators</u> | 2 |
| 3.1.5 <u>Accuracy</u> | 2 |
| 3.1.6 <u>Pronunciation</u> | 2 |
| 3.2 <u>Announcements</u> | 2 |
| 3.2.1 <u>Beginning Announcements -- Side One</u> | 3 |
| 3.2.2 <u>Beginning Announcements for Subsequent Sides</u> | 4 |
| 3.2.3 <u>Ending Announcements</u> | 4 |
| 3.2.3.1 <u>Odd Sides</u> | 4 |
| 3.2.3.2 <u>Even Sides</u> | 4 |
| 3.2.3.3 <u>Last Side</u> | 4 |
| 3.3 <u>Recording Level</u> | 5 |
| 3.4 <u>Program Material Placement</u> | 5 |
| 3.5 <u>Recording Speed and Timing</u> | 5 |
| 3.5.1 <u>Flexible-Disc Magazines and C-60 15/16 ips Cassettes</u> | 5 |
| 3.5.2 <u>Rigid-Disc Magazines and C-90 15/16 ips Cassettes</u> | 5 |
| 3.5.3 <u>Timing</u> | 5 |
| 4. QUALITY ASSURANCE | 6 |
| 4.1 <u>Contractor Inspection</u> | 6 |
| 4.1.1 <u>Monitor</u> | 6 |
| 4.1.2 <u>Review</u> | 6 |
| 4.2 <u>NLS Inspection</u> | 6 |

NLS
Specification #301

1. SCOPE

The Library of Congress, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS), administers a program which provides material in recorded and other formats to eligible blind and physically handicapped readers. This specification describes the minimum acceptable requirements for the narration of print magazines during production of original master recording. It states the requirements for content and placement of program material, recording level, and timing requirements. The following requirements, susceptible to subjective evaluation, must be fulfilled. NLS may reject any master tape recording which fails to meet the requirements specified herein. Specific artistic points not covered by these specifications are subject to judgement by NLS staff and also can be cause for rejection of a particular title.

2. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS

American Heritage Dictionary
Columbia Lippincott Gazetteer of the World
Current Biography
Kenyon and Knott Dictionary of American English Pronunciation
NBA Tape Recording Manual, Third Edition
New Century Cyclopedia of Names
The New Columbia Encyclopedia
The Random House Dictionary of the English Language
Webster's Biographical Dictionary
Webster's Geographical Dictionary
Webster's New International Dictionary, Second & Third Editions

Other authoritative documents are acceptable.

3. REQUIREMENTS

3.1 Narration Criteria

The narration shall meet the requirements stated below. These requirements are susceptible to subjective evaluation.

3.1.1 Voice

The narrator's voice, when recorded, must be: (a) clear, firm, and distinct; (b) flexible enough to avoid monotonous or repetitious vocal patterns; (c) free of strain or tension; (d) able to sustain energy over long periods of time; (e) free of any uncontrollable medical or physical conditions; (f) free of impure tonal characteristics (scratchiness, nasalness, raspiness, etc.).

3.1.2 Speech

The narrator's speech shall be : (a) free of excessive regional coloration or accents; (b) free of patterns not associated with American English; (c) free of mannerisms that detract from the text; (d) neither too rushed nor too slow for comfortable listening over extended periods of time.

3.1.3 Aesthetic/Interpretative Requirements

The narrator must be attentive to the sense of the magazine, be skillful in securing proper emphasis, and avoid a stilted, mechanical, monotonous delivery. The emotional content of the voice shall at all times be appropriate to the emotional level of the magazine. The narrator, by proper use of timing and inflection, must clearly differentiate between narrative and dialogue, and between various characters depicted. If character voices are utilized, each separate vocal characterization must possess the same ease, flow, and vocal range as the normal narrative voice. Character interpretations, dialects, and accents that are strained, unclear, inconsistent, or overplayed shall not be acceptable.

3.1.4 Alternate Narrators

Each magazine shall be recorded using a minimum of two narrators. Each narrator shall record an entire article but not two consecutive articles.

3.1.5 Accuracy

Narration shall conform to the print edition in its entirety, excluding advertising, unless specified by NLS. Articles shall be read in order of appearance. Quotations from works such as the Bible, historical documents, and poems shall be word perfect. The following points will be cause for immediate rejection.

- a. Mispronunciations
- b. Changing the original meaning of the text by improper inflection or interpretation.
- c. Failure to satisfactorily follow the text of the print edition.

Proper names, foreign words and phrases shall be recorded with extreme care and accuracy.

3.1.6 Pronunciation

Pronunciation shall be appropriate to the style and period of the magazine and to the nature of the characters. For general vocabulary usage, any of the sources listed in Section 2 of this specification shall be used as an authoritative source. When such sources are not likely to be useful, specialized reference works (music, law, medicine, British speech, etc.) may be used. Additional research is required if published sources do not give the needed pronunciations. In case of dispute, final authority rests with the NLS Quality Assurance Head.

3.2 Announcements

All titles shall carry the following recorded announcements in the order stated. Strict attention should be given to the assigned wording. Reference to care of recording or avoidance of damage is prohibited, as are any announcements or program material not specified.

3.2.1 Beginning Announcements -- Side One

The following announcements shall be recorded at the beginning of side one:

- (a) "This magazine contains up to four sides per cassette."
(This statement to be used on masters produced for cassette duplication only.)
- (b) "Side one"
- (c) Title
- (d) Date of issue (include volume number and issue number in professional journals such as Personnel and Guidance Journal and Social Work).
- (e) "Copyright (date and holder(s))."
- (f) The following statement should be included only by specific instruction: "This recording is tone indexed. The beginning of each (chapter, article, section, division) will be indicated by a beep audible when your cassette player is in the fast-forward or rewind mode." If the magazine is being recorded for use on disc, add the following phrase; "...or when your record player is set at the 33 rpm speed." The index tone shall be 100 Hz at -12 VU, 5 second minimum, 8 seconds maximum, recorded under the voice within the last 10 seconds of the material preceding each indexed section.
- (g) "Read by _____ and _____."
- (h) "This magazine contains _____ pages on _____ sides and was originally produced for the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress. You will not be contacted by the producer of this magazine to verify cancellation or change of address. To cancel your subscription or if you change your address, please notify your cooperating network library. Allow six to eight weeks for address change. Send both old and new addresses."
- (i) Table of contents indicating the side on which each article appears, the name of the article and the print page number. Articles shall be read in order of appearance, regardless of print table of contents format.

In professional journals such as Personnel and Guidance Journal and Social Work, not only include page numbers listed in table of contents but also read page numbers at the first sentence break on each page. Include numbers of pages that contain no text, noting that they are blank, contain only advertising, etc.
- (j) "This recorded edition contains the entire text of the print edition except for advertising." (Use this statement when nothing has been excluded) or "This recorded edition contains the entire text of the print edition except for

advertising and _____ deleted by instruction of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped." (Use this statement when something has been excluded).

3.2.2 Beginning Announcements for Subsequent Sides

The following announcements shall be recorded at the beginning of all sides except side one:

- (a) "Side _____ (number) _____"
- (b) Title
- (c) Date of issue
- (d) Contents on that side
- (e) "Continuing with _____ (title of article) _____" or
"Beginning with _____ (title of article) _____".

3.2.3 Ending Announcements

3.2.3.1 Odd Sides

The following announcements shall be recorded at the end of each odd-numbered side; except the last side:

- (a) "End of side (1, 3, 5, 7, etc.)."
- (b) "To continue, turn the cassette over." (This statement to be used on masters produced for cassette duplication only.)

3.2.3.2 Even Sides

The following announcements shall be recorded at the end of each even-numbered side in the order specified below, except the last side:

- (a) All even sides - "End of side (2, 4, 6, 8, etc.)."
- (b) Sides 2, 6, 10, 14, etc. - "To continue, change side selector switch and turn the cassette over." (This statement to be used on masters produced for cassette duplication only.)
- (c) Sides 4, 8, 12, 16, etc. - "To continue, change side selector switch. This magazine is continued on the next cassette." (This statement to be used on masters produced for cassette duplication only.)

3.2.3.3 Last Side

The following announcements shall be recorded on the last side at the end of the text, in the order stated:

- (a) "End of _____ (title) _____"
- (b) "Read by _____ and _____
for the Library of Congress, (month and year)."
- (c) "Published by: (publisher's name and address as
it appears in the print edition). Further
reproduction or distribution in other than a
specialized format is prohibited."
- (d) "If you experience any difficulty with this
recording, please specify the problem on a
postcard or letter addressed to Materials
Development Division, National Library Service
for the Blind and Physically Handicapped,
Washington, D.C. 20542."

3.3 Recording Level

- (a) The recording level shall be uniform on all soundtracks.
- (b) The average recording level shall be -3VU (\pm 3VU).
- (c) No recording shall reach a level that causes the narration
to be distorted.

3.4 Program Material Placement

The soundtracks shall be placed so that the beginning of each
succeeding side shall coincide with the ending of the previous
side. Masters for flexible discs are exempt from this
requirement.

3.5 Recording Speed and Timing

All master recordings submitted shall be recorded at 3-3/4 ips
(inches per second) on two tracks.

3.5.1 Flexible-Disc Magazines and C-60 15/16 ips Cassettes

The recorded time for each side shall be 60 minutes +0 or up to -1
minute, except for the last side. All 60 minute soundtracks shall
be enclosed within a tape length of 1125 feet.

3.5.2 Rigid-Disc Magazines and C-90 15/16 ips Cassettes

The recorded time for each soundtrack shall be 88 minutes +0 or up
to -1 minute, except the last side. All 88 minute soundtracks
shall be enclosed within a tape length of 1650 feet.

3.5.3 Timing

Careful attention to the above will reduce timing overruns at the
end of the magazine. If the use of the final side could have been
avoided by conforming to the above timing requirements, the
magazine may be rejected or the cost of the last side charged to
the contractor.

4. QUALITY ASSURANCE

4.1 Contractor Inspection

The contractor is responsible for inspection and surveillance of production to ensure that the recorded magazine complies with all the specified requirements.

4.1.1 Monitor

The narrator shall be continuously monitored by a second person using a print copy of the text in order to detect errors and control the recording process.

4.1.2 Review

Each master tape shall be proofread in its entirety by a third person. Errors, overdubs, and improper erasures shall be corrected.

4.2 NLS Inspection

The NLS reserves the right to inspect each original master for compliance with specified requirements, and also reserves the right to reject any master tape that fails to meet these requirements.